

X-FACTOR



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YARDIN

X-FACTOR



PREVIOUSLY...

X-FACTOR WAS CALLED IN WHEN A YOUNG MOTHER RESIDING IN MADROX'S OLD HOMESTEAD IN THE MIDWEST WAS FOUND DEAD (WITH X-FACTOR'S BUSINESS CARD IN HER POCKET) AND HER SON MISSING. WHEN LONGSHOT ENDEAVORED TO USE HIS MUTANT POWER TO GET A READ OFF HER BODY IN THE MORGUE, IT CAME TO LIFE, ANIMATED BY A FORCE SIMPLY IDENTIFYING ITSELF AS "B.B." IT WARNED X-FACTOR OFF AND VANISHED FROM HER CORPSE.

MEANWHILE: PETER FINISHED READING HIS NOVEL "TIGERHEART" TO EIGHT YEAR OLD CAROLINE, WHO PROMPTLY DECLARED IT SO GOOD THAT SHE SWORE SHE WOULD READ IT TO HER OWN CHILDREN WHEN SHE GREW UP. WHEN HE POINTED OUT THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD BE HAPPY TO READ IT TO HIS GRANDCHILDREN, SHE ALLOWED THAT THAT WOULD BE POSSIBLE, PROVIDED "YOU AREN'T DEAD OR IN AN OLD AGE HOME."

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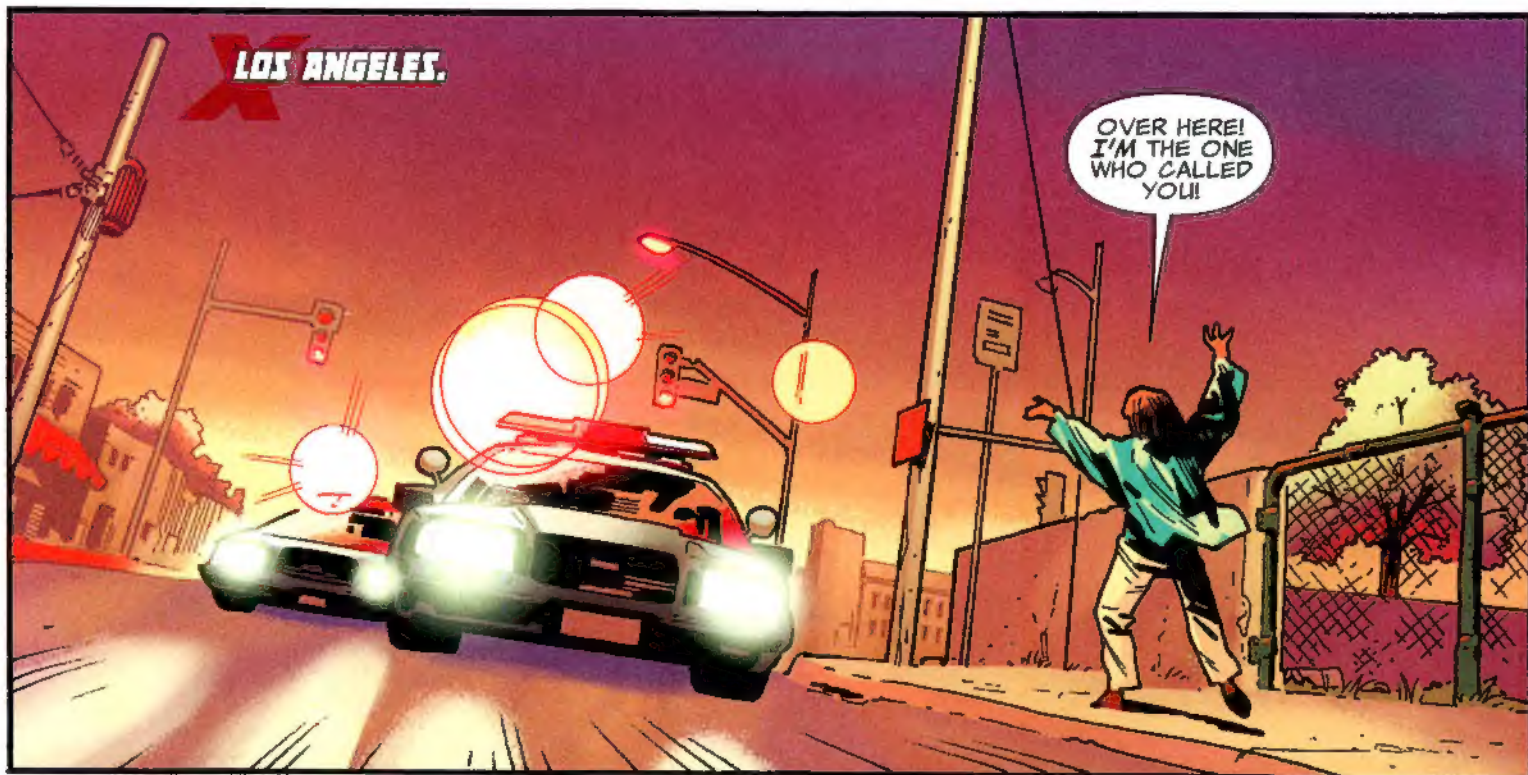
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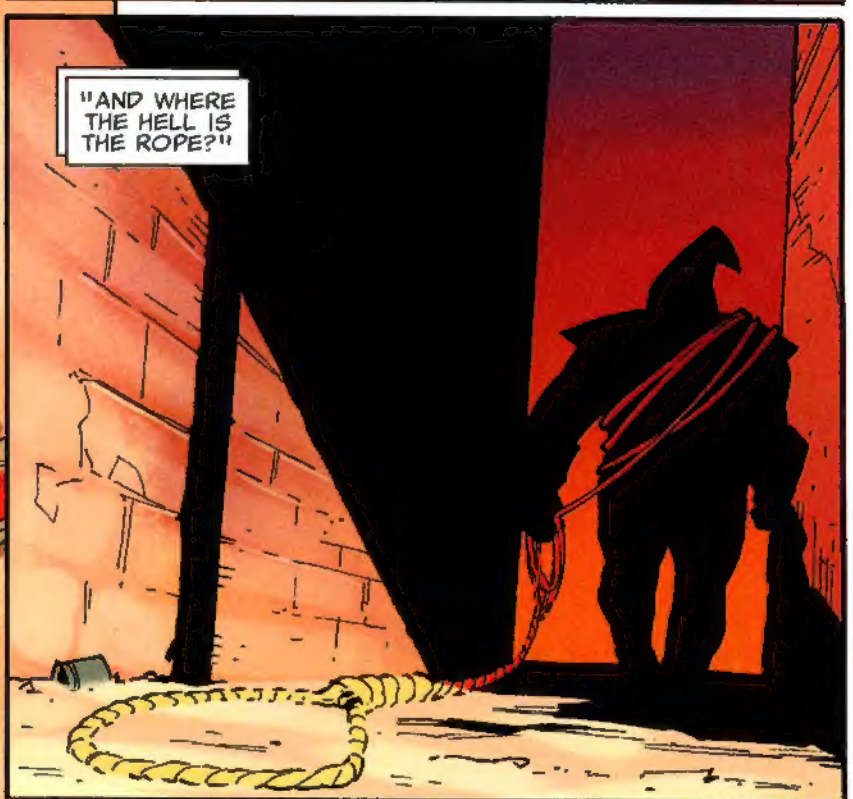
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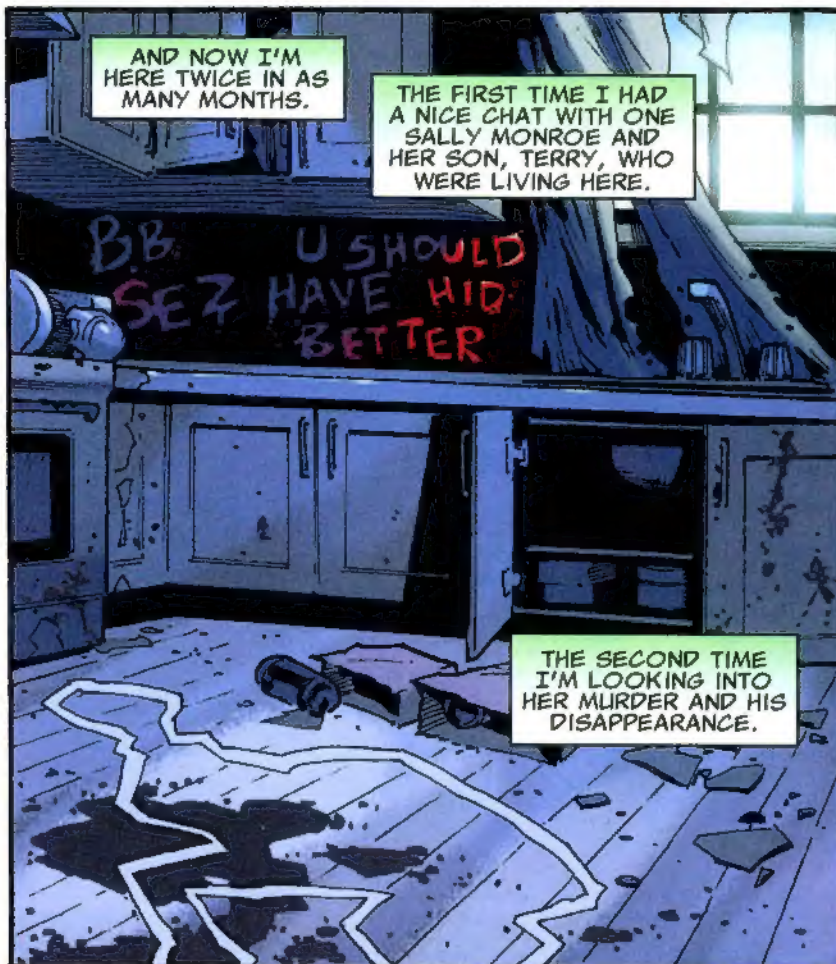






**LAWRENCEVILLE,
KANSAS.**

I HADN'T BEEN
TO THE OLD
FARM IN YEARS...



AND NOW I'M
HERE TWICE IN AS
MANY MONTHS.

THE FIRST TIME I HAD
A NICE CHAT WITH ONE
SALLY MONROE AND
HER SON, TERRY, WHO
WERE LIVING HERE.

B.B. U SHOULD
SEZ HAVE HAD
BETTER

THE SECOND TIME
I'M LOOKING INTO
HER MURDER AND HIS
DISAPPEARANCE.



SHE PUT
UP ONE HELL
OF A FIGHT.

SHE DIED
VALIANTLY.

BUT SHE
STILL DIED. THE
HOW DOESN'T
MATTER SO
MUCH.

IT
ALWAYS
MATTERS.



YOU GOT ANYTHING
TO ADD HERE,
LAYLA? ANY INSIGHTS
YOU'D WANT TO
SHARE, LIKE WHERE
THE BOY WENT?

YOU DON'T
REALLY NEED
MY INSIGHTS,
DO YOU?

OH, I
DON'T?



A SCARED,
MISSING BOY?
YOU'VE BEEN
THERE AND
DONE THAT.



WHAT'S
THAT
SUPPOSED
TO--?

OH, OF
COURSE.

OUR FARM WOULD
UP SPOOKING THE
LOCALS FOR THE
LONGEST TIME.

IT SEEMED TO KEEP
RUNNING, WITH THE CROPS
BEING ATTENDED TO BY
WHAT WOULD HAVE HAD TO
BE VARIOUS FARM HANDS...

...BUT NO
ONE EVER SAW
ANYBODY.

NOTHING LIKE BEING
HAUNTED TO STOP
PEOPLE FROM LOOKING
TOO CLOSELY.

WHICH ENABLED
YOUNG JAMIE
MADROX TO WORK
THE FARM WITH HIS
DUPES AT NIGHT...

...WHILE HIDING
OUT IN THE
FAMILY BOMB
SHELTER ALL
DAY.

LAYLA,
STAR,
STAY
UP HERE.
LONGSHOT,
WITH ME.

A FIGHT
HERE AS
WELL.

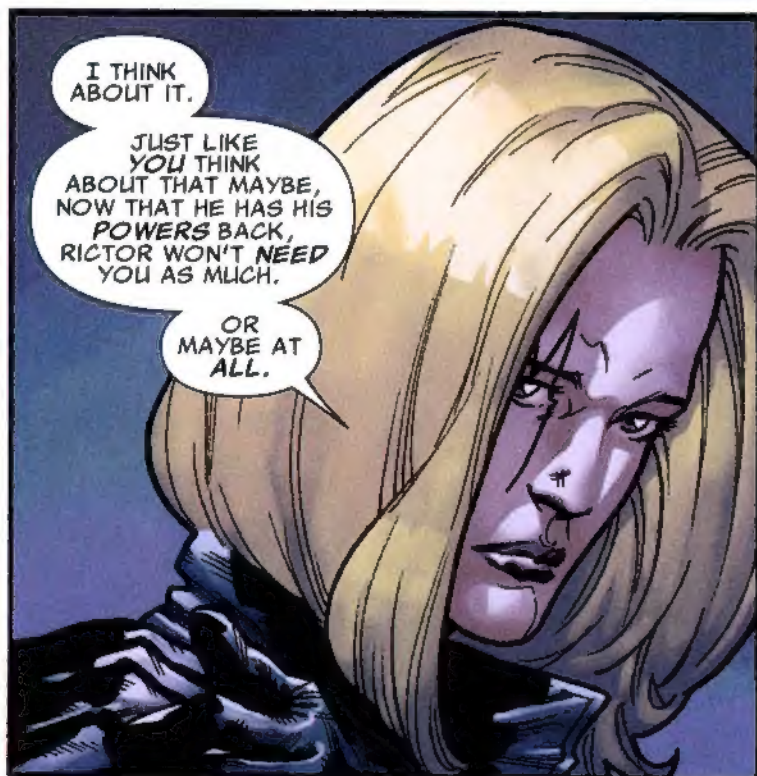
YEAH.
WHATEVER CAME
THROUGH HERE
SURE LIKES TO
MAKE A MESS OF
THINGS.

YOU MEAN
"B.B."? THAT'S
WHAT IT CALLED
ITSELF IN THE
MORGUE...

AND IT WAS
SCRAWLED ON
THE KITCHEN
WALL TOO.

START
POKING AROUND.
MAYBE YOU
COULDN'T GET A
READ OFF SALLY'S
CORPSE...

...BUT
SOMETHING
HERE MIGHT
TRIGGER
IT.





SO?
ANYTHING?

SAME THING
I'M GETTING OFF
EVERYTHING ELSE:
A BIG, FAT
NOTHING.

THIS IS
STARTING TO
CRIMP MY FAITH
IN MY LUCK
POWERS.

DON'T WORRY.
TO BE HONEST,
NONE OF US HAVE
FAITH IN YOUR LUCK
POWERS.



WELL, THEN: I
THINK WE BOTH
NEED TO HAVE
SOME FAITH.

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?

TRUSTING
IN MY
POWERS.



I'M ALLOWING
THEM TO GUIDE
ME TO WHAT WE
NEED IN ORDER
TO--



KRAASH



HOW'D
THAT WORK
OUT FOR
YOU?

OW.

I MEAN,
I THINK I
FOUND
SOMETHING,
BUT...OW.

YEAH?
WHAT'D'JA
FIND?



A SAG
CARD.



"SAG"?
WHAT'S
"SAG"?



IT'S WHAT'CHER
BREASTS DO
WHEN YA WALK
AROUND WITH THE
FRONT OF YER
COSTUME
UNZIPPED.



WHOA!

HEY! MONET,
YOU ALMOST
HIT ME!



IT WOULD'VE
SERVED YOU RIGHT.
YOU BROUGHT THE
LITTLE PERVERT
HERE.

"SAG"
INDEED.

OUTRAGEOUS.
TO ME THEY
APPEAR TO DEFEY
GRAVITY.

SHUT
UP.

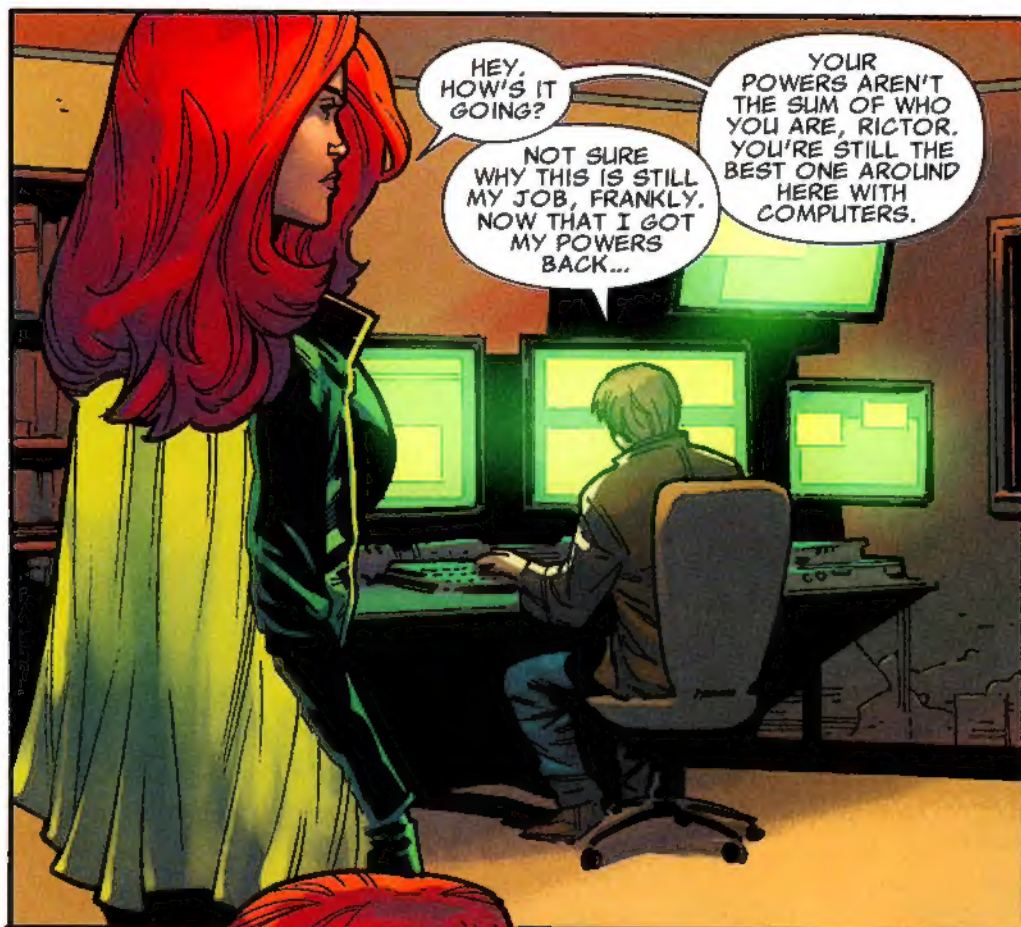


"SAG" IS THE
SCREEN ACTORS
GUILD. THE CARD
BELONGS TO ONE
JASON ROLAND WHO,
GUESSING FROM
THE SURNAME, IS
TERRY'S FATHER.
A SOUVENIR,
MAYBE.

RICTOR IS
TRYING TO RUN
DOWN MORE
ON HIM WITH THE
WEB. IN THE
MEANTIME...



...WE'LL
SEE IF PIP'S
COSMIC MOJO
FIRES UP WHERE
LONGSHOT'S
STALLED OUT.



HEY, HOW'S IT GOING?

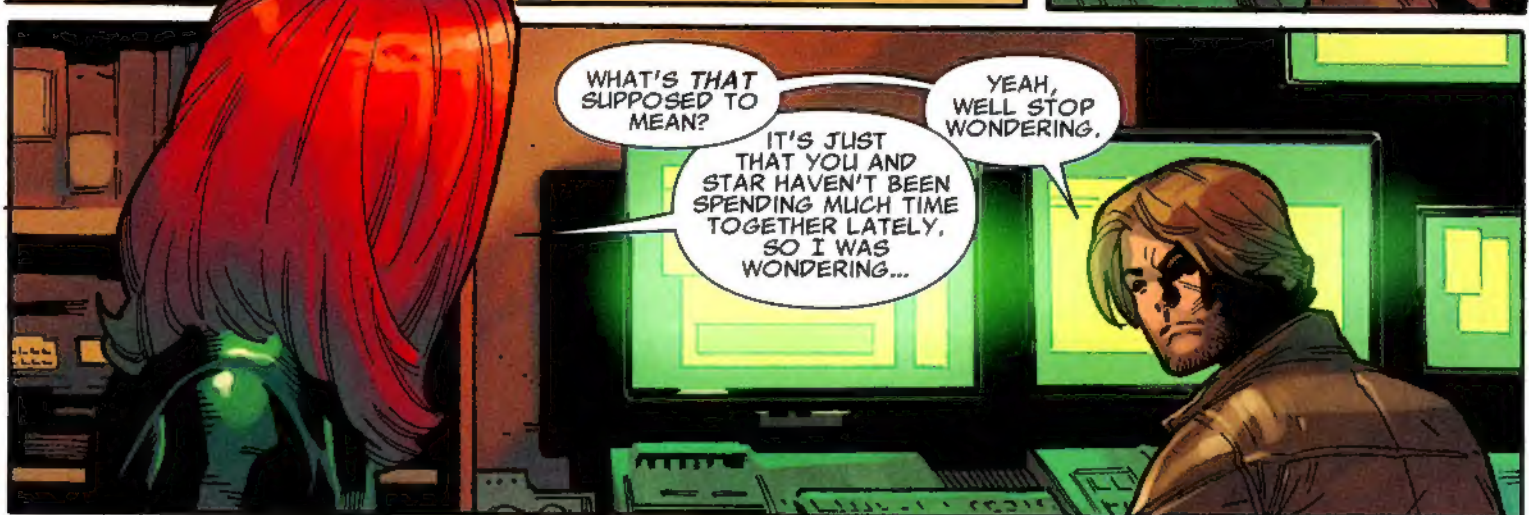
NOT SURE WHY THIS IS STILL MY JOB, FRANKLY. NOW THAT I GOT MY POWERS BACK...

YOUR POWERS AREN'T THE SUM OF WHO YOU ARE, RICTOR. YOU'RE STILL THE BEST ONE AROUND HERE WITH COMPUTERS.



I KNOW, BUT JUST LOOKING AT IT REMINDS ME OF WHEN I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ELSE.

AND DOES LOOKING AT SHATTERSTAR GIVE YOU THE SAME FEELING?



WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

IT'S JUST THAT YOU AND STAR HAVEN'T BEEN SPENDING MUCH TIME TOGETHER LATELY, SO I WAS WONDERING...

YEAH, WELL STOP WONDERING.



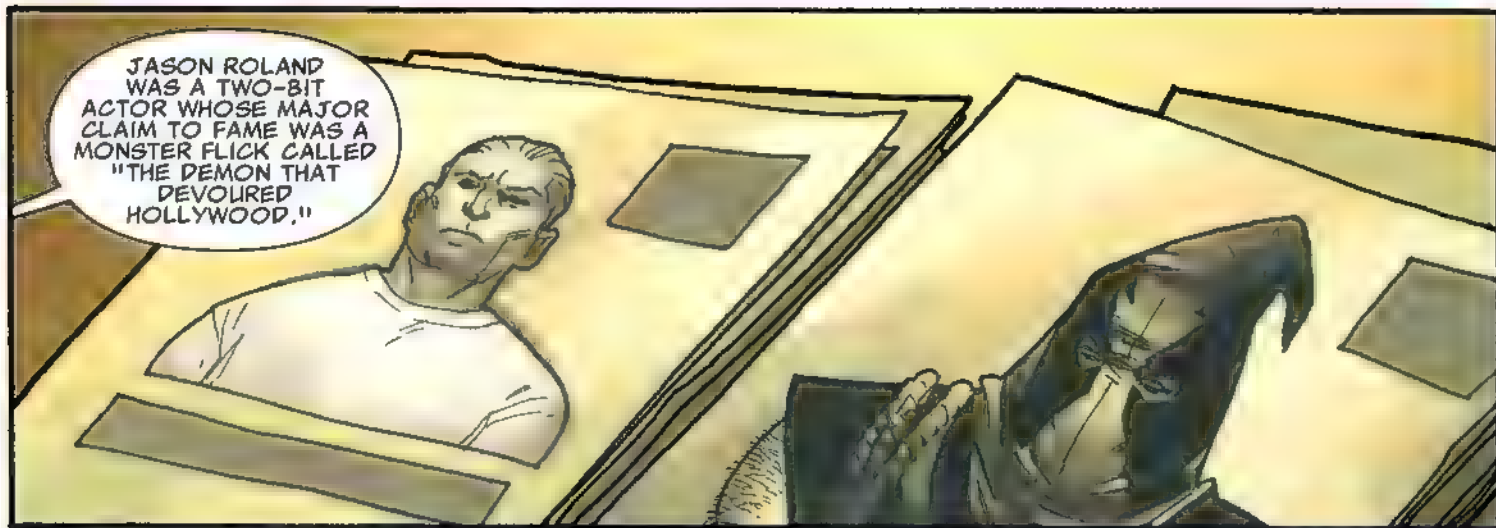
Y'KNOW, YOU WERE A LOT LESS OF A JERK WITHOUT YOUR POWERS.

THANKS, TERRY. COMING FROM THE PERSON WHO BROKE MADROX'S FINGER, THAT MEANS A--



WHOA. HELL-O. SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON "HELL."

WHAT'VE YOU GOT?





MADROX...

I GOT 'IM.

YOU SURE?



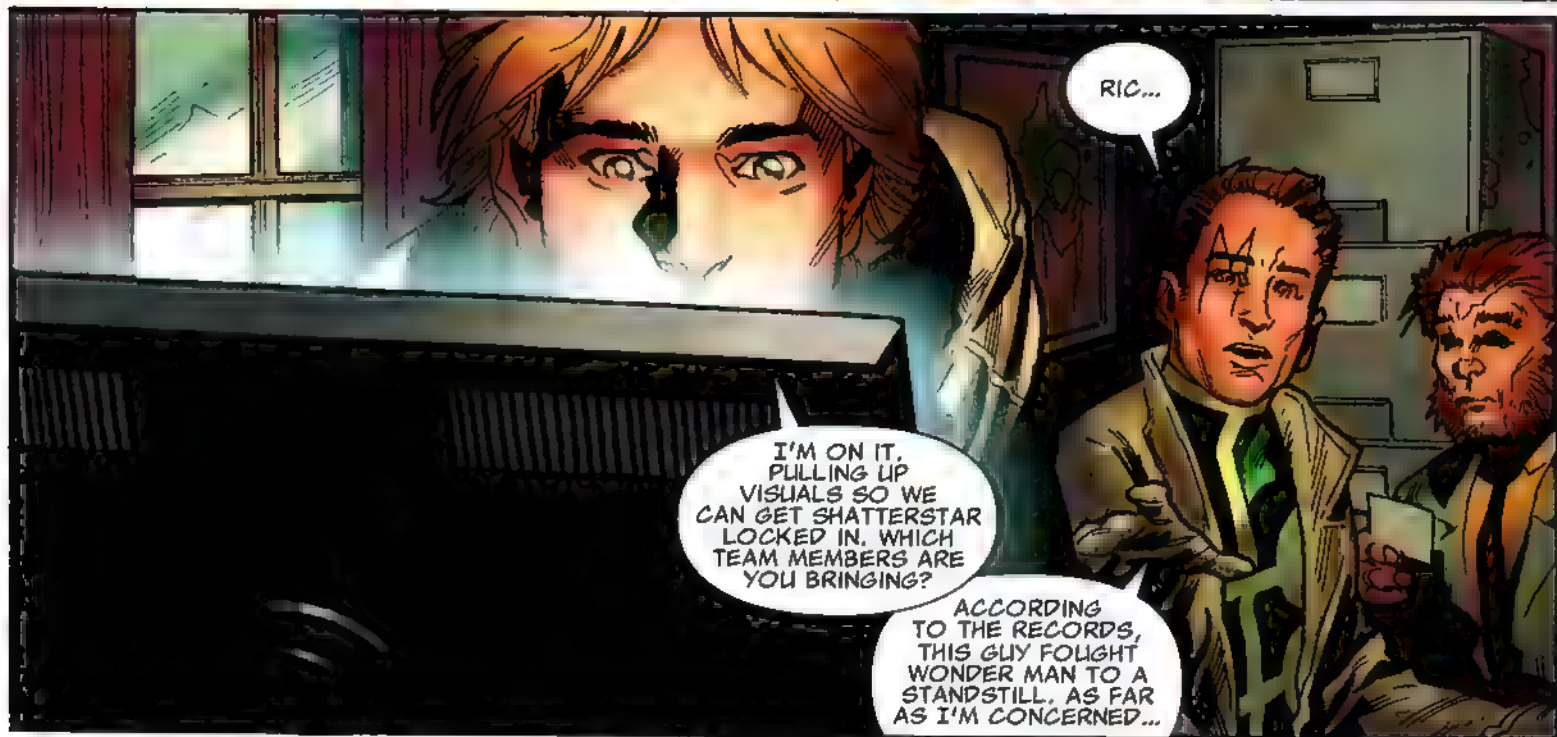
OH YEAH.
I'M SURE.
I'M LOCKED
IN ON HIM.

FOURTH
STREET BRIDGE IN
LOS ANGELES.

AND
MADROX...

YEAH?

HE'S
REALLY
PISSED.



RIC...

I'M ON IT.
PULLING UP
VISUALS SO WE
CAN GET SHATTERSTAR
LOCKED IN. WHICH
TEAM MEMBERS ARE
YOU BRINGING?

ACCORDING
TO THE RECORDS,
THIS GUY FOUGHT
WONDER MAN TO A
STANDSTILL. AS FAR
AS I'M CONCERNED...



"...THIS IS GONNA
BE ALL HANDS
ON DECK."



OKAY,
PEOPLE, HERE'S
OUR WORKING
ASSUMPTION:

HANGMAN'S
WIFE AND HE SPLIT
AND SHE DIDN'T TELL
HIM SHE WAS PREGNANT.
ONCE SHE HAD THE
KID, SHE WENT
UNDERGROUND.

HANGMAN
EVENTUALLY CAUGHT
WIND AND HUNTED THEM
DOWN. SNIFFED HER,
GRABBED HIM.



BUT WHO
POSSESSED HER
CORPSE? AND
WHO'S "B.B."?

HE MUST
HAVE A
PARTNER OR
AN ALLY.

SO WE
HAVE TO BE
READY FOR
ANYTHING.





WALKING ON WATER, MONET? DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A LITTLE... YOU KNOW...

A LITTLE WHAT?

YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SAY, BANSHEE?

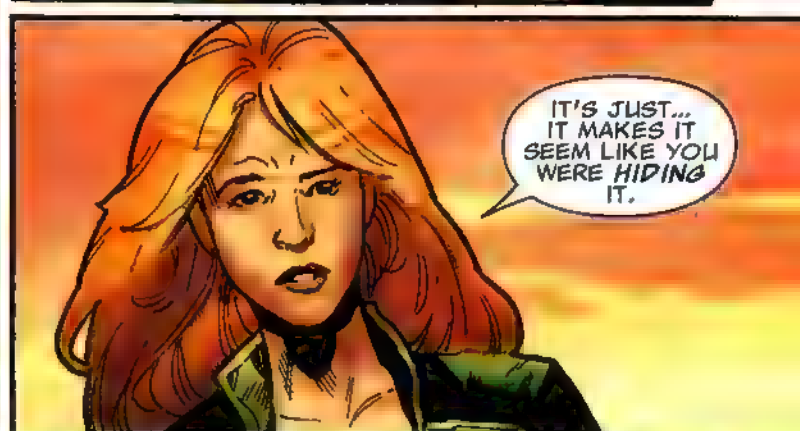


WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME YOU WERE MUSLIM?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THAT MAKE?

NONE, I GUESS, BUT--

YOU GUESS?



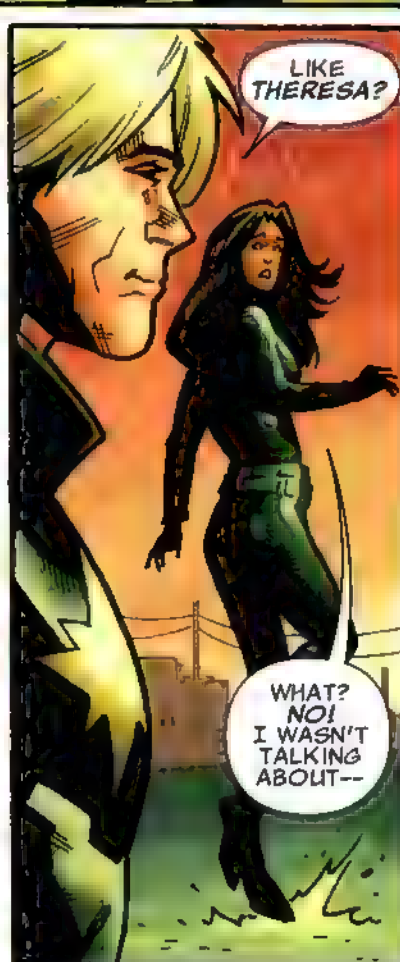
IT'S JUST... IT MAKES IT SEEM LIKE YOU WERE HIDING IT.



I DON'T THINK ABOUT IT MUCH.

THAT WAY LIES ENDLESS THEOLOGICAL SOUL SEARCHING WHENEVER THINGS GO WRONG.

"WHY DID GOD DO THIS?" "AM I A BAD PERSON, THAT I BROUGHT THIS ON MYSELF?" "WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?" I DON'T WANT TO BE--



LIKE THERESA?

WHAT? NO! I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT--



IF YOU WEREN'T, MAYBE YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN.

LET'S STAY FOCUSED.

TERRY, I--



MAN, I
HOPE WE FIND
HIM FIRST.

I'M
ITCHING TO CUT
LOOSE.

THERE'S
SO MUCH I
WANNA DO...



FINALLY YOU
UNDERSTAND.

UNDERSTAND...?

HOW I WAS
FEELING A
WHILE BACK,
ABOUT WANTING
TO TRY
THINGS...

"CUT
LOOSE," AS
IT WERE.



YOU'RE COMPARING
MY GETTING MY
POWERS BACK WITH
YOU WANTING TO
SLEEP AROUND WITH
ME AS YOUR
GUIDE?

THERE ARE
SIMILARITIES.

LIKE HELL
THERE ARE!
IT'S--



OKAY, Y'KNOW WHAT?
FINE, I GIVE UP. YOU
WANNA EXPERIMENT?
LET'S SEE HOW FAR WE
GET WITH THAT.

HEY, LAYLA.
WANNA PARTY
DOWN WITH
SHATTERSTAR
AND ME?



SURE,
SOUNDS
LIKE FUN.

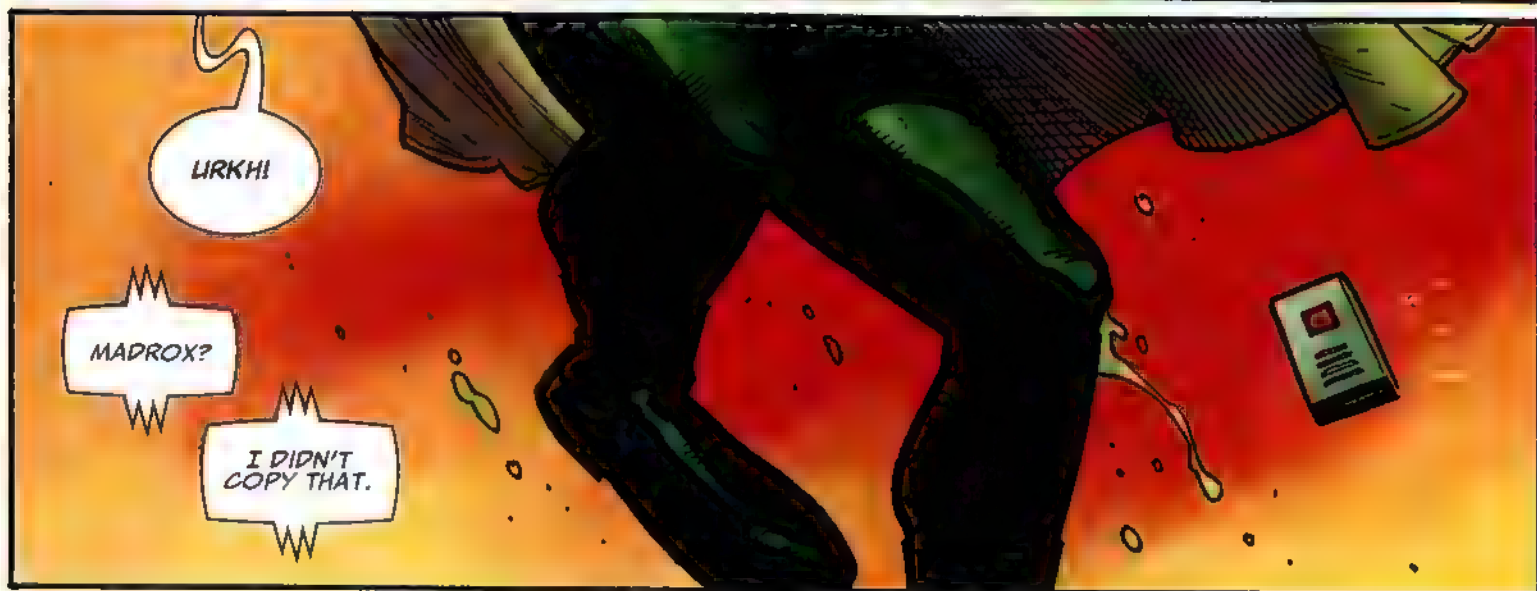
THERE,
SEE?! THIS IS
THE KIND OF
REACTION YOU
CAN EXPECT
FROM--



WAIT,
WHAT?

I BET
HE MAKES
THE EARTH
MOVE.

YOU
HAVE NO
IDEA.





GOT MY HANDS
UNDER THE NOOSE...
JUST IN TIME...

...BOUGHT
ME SECONDS...
AT MOST...

BANG YOUR
HEELS AND
SAY...

THERE'S NO
PLACE LIKE
CLONES...

THE ROPE'S
PULLING UP!
WE'RE GONNA
NEED SOME
HELP!!



MADROXI!
HANG ON!



"HANG ON!"
NOT THE BEST
CHOICE OF
WORDS!



OW!

OUCH!

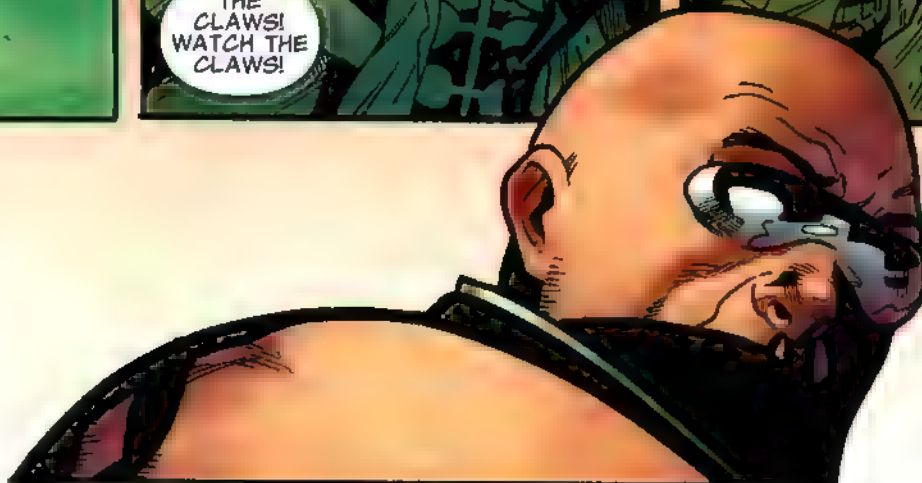
THE
CLAWS!
WATCH THE
CLAWS!



DON'T WORRY
ABOUT HURTIN'
HIM! HE'S TOUGH,
HE CAN TAKE
IT!

LEMME
KNOW IF THERE'S
ANYTHING
I CAN DO!

WELL, FOR
STARTERS...







THERE IS NO "JASON" ANYMORE! DON'T YOU GET IT?

THERE'S ONLY THE HANGMAN NOW! JASON'S DEAD!



JASON'S AS DEAD AS YER WIFE, HUH? AND DID'JA KILL YER SON, TOO?



SHE... SHE'S DEAD?

SALLY'S... DEAD?



HLINNFEE!



MADROX, ARE YE OKAY?

WELL, NOT BEING STRANGLER BEATS BEING STRANGLER, SO YEAH.

WHERE'S HANGMAN?!



HE...HE SWORE HE WOULDN'T HURT THEM...HE SWORE... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HE WAS LYING...

OH GOD...POOR SALLY...

"HE" WHO? WHO SWORE?



BLOODBATH. AND IF I DON'T DO WHAT HE SAYS...

HE'S GOING TO KILL US ALL.



NEXT



IT'S A BLOODBATH!

DON'T FORGET TO WRITE TO US AT OFFICEX@MARVEL.COM
AND MARK "OK TO PRINT"!

PETER IS EXCITED TO GET THE LETTERS PAGE GOING AGAIN! DON'T LET HIM DOWN!



Lizard *DER*